

Mansfield Commission on Aging Agenda
Tuesday, November 8, 2004 2:30 PM – Senior Center

PRESENT: K. Grunwald (staff), S. Thomas (chair), M. Thatcher, B. Acebo, N. Stevens, C. McMillan, K. Doeg, E. Norris, C. Phillips, P. Hope (staff), J. Kenny (staff)

REGRETS: D. Mercier, P. Secker

- I. Call to Order: the meeting was called to order by Chair, S. Thomas at 2:30 PM.
- II. Appointment of Recording Secretary: K. Grunwald agreed to take minutes for the meeting.
- III. Acceptance of Minutes of the October 12, 2004 meeting: the minutes were accepted with the following corrections: as noted M. Thatcher is no longer on the Committee for the Physically and Sensorily Impaired (MACNPD).
- IV. Correspondence - Chair and Staff: S. Thomas shared a copy of the CT Commission on Aging newsletter, including a survey that has been requested. A small number of surveys have been returned from the Center. She asked that all members of this Commission check to make sure that they are on the mailing list for this newsletter.
- V. Optional Reports on Services/Needs of Town Aging Populations
 - A. Health Care Services
Wellness Center and Wellness Program – J. Kenny did not have a copy of her report to distribute, as she recently returned from medical leave. She announced that she will be starting a diabetic support group. There will be no formal Weight Watchers group this quarter.

Mansfield Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation – J. Kenny reported on her stay there.

Social, Recreational and Educational
Senior Center – P. Hope distributed copies of her report. She mentioned that Linda Wohllebe, Center secretary, is out on a medical leave. We will be updating reporting when she returns in an attempt to get a more accurate count of unduplicated members using services of the Center. She also mentioned that there will be a lunch for Veteran's and a recognition event tomorrow, November 9.

Senior Center Assoc. – John Brubacher was not present; no report. There will be an Association breakfast meeting this Wed., November 10, at 9:00. A Clothing Bazaar will be held this Saturday from 10-2 at the Senior Center.
 - C. Housing
 - Assisted Living Project: no meetings of the Coalition.
 - Juniper Hill: B. Acebo shared an article from the Chronicle on a \$1.4m. HUD grant to renovate 12 apartments for assisted living. Some question was raised as to whether or not any portion of this grant will be used to subsidize the cost of assisted living services.

Jensen's Park, Other: no report.

D. Related Town and Regional Organizations

Com. on Physically and Sensorily Impaired – K. Grunwald reported that this Committee is seeking new members; please see him if you are interested.

Senior Resources of Eastern CT: no designated representative from this Commission, Senior Resources would like to have a member representing Mansfield.

Town Plan of Conservation and Development – Carol Phillips: there will be a presentation on the Mansfield Downtown Partnership this Wed. night at E.O. Smith High School.

Town Community Center: no report.

VI Old Business

Preparation of The Long Range Plan (2004-2014) – K. Grunwald facilitated a follow-up to the areas of the plan that were assigned at the previous meeting.

Physical Environment: E. Norris reported that she is still collecting information about housing options for seniors currently available in Mansfield. Some information was presented on Wright's Village and Juniper Hill. She noted that there is a wide range of housing needs for seniors, based on service needs, income, and other factors.

Health: C. McMillan reviewed the existing long-range plan, and felt that many health-related services are currently offered at the Senior Center or by other providers. She is beginning to identify survey questions to determine whether or not these services are accessible, affordable, well-publicized, etc. There was some discussion of the range of services that are available, and whether or not they are affordable.

Economy: M. Thatcher reviewed the existing long-range plan, looking at both the existence and adequacy. She noted that the Sparks newsletter makes information available, as well as use of other communication vehicles. She raised the question about how residents get information about available services, and what help can currently be provided by the Town. She also noted the absence of information about the volunteer conservatorship training, but noted tax preparation assistance and legal service representation offered at the Senior Center. In general information needs to be made more available, along with support to access services. A question was raised of how to reach individuals who qualify for subsidized services. The COA does review pending legislation and priority areas, but felt that we should pay more attention to fair distribution of federal and state funding. There is a need to look at the issue of assisting "land rich" elderly. It was pointed out that decisions made by individuals in this area need to consult with experts around estate planning issues. Other survey questions: Medicare/Medigap, other areas of economic/financial issues, long-term care insurance, investments, presentations on finance,

Technology: P. Secker was not present, but made a written copy of his report available. The report was reviewed and it was noted that computers are available in the Community Center. The question of the availability of assistive technology in the Town Hall for hearing impaired was raised. A question of making free cell phones available for 911 use was also raised.

Safety/Security: K. Doeg reviewed material to summarize categories to be addressed: 1) Communication: Lifeline, distribution of cell phones, pagers, affordable technologies, card/flashing light in the window, etc. (2) Education: use of Senior Center programs and include regular column in Sparks related to safety, publish an annual flyer with info. about resources related to safety (3) Safety in the physical environment: sidewalks, immunization, etc. Social/Cultural Environment: C. Phillips: deferred to our next meeting. Services/Support: D. Mercier was not present Transportation: B. Acebo reviewed achievement of goals in the existing LRP. Feeling that it is difficult to get volunteer drivers. There is a need to identify specific survey questions to determine what the need is, identify what plans are in place for adding sidewalks. Look at use of the Transportation Advisory Committee as a resource in this area. Discussed the role of advocacy and education in addressing these issues, rather than looking at individual issues.

VII New Business: none.

VII. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 4:25 PM

Next meeting is scheduled for December 13 at 2:30 pm at the Senior Center

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Grunwald
Director of Social Services